

*The Sea-Serpent again!*

“To the Editor of the *Natal Colonist*.

“SIR,—Thinking that a truthful description by an eye-witness of that marvel of the ocean, the sea-serpent, may interest your readers, I crave your kind indulgence for the insertion of the following particulars:—

“During my late passage from London I saw no less than three sea-serpents; but an account of the last will suffice.

“On the 30th of December last, on board the ‘*Silvery Wave*,’ in lat. about 35° South and long. 33° 30′ East, at 6.20 P.M., solar time, an enormous serpent passing nearly across our bows compelled the alteration of our course. He was at least 1000 yards long, of which about one third appeared on the surface of the water at every stroke of his enormous fan-shaped tail, with which he propelled himself, raising it high above the waves and arching his back like a land-snake or a caterpillar. In shape and proportion he much resembled the cobra, being marked by the same knotty and swollen protuberance at the back of the head on the neck. The latter was the thickest part of the serpent. His head was like a bull’s in shape, his eyes large and glowing, his ears had circular tips and were level with his eyes, and his head was surmounted by a horny crest which he erected and depressed at pleasure. He swam with great rapidity and lashed the sea into a foam, like breakers dashing over jagged rocks. The sun shone brightly upon him, and with a good glass I saw his overlapping scales open and shut with every arch of his sinuous back, coloured like the rainbow.

“I am &c.,

“J. COBBIN.”

“West Street, Durban, Jan. 22, 1872.”

*Observations on the Extinct Whalebone-Whales (Balænoidea) the Remains of which have been found in the Vienna Basin.* By Prof. J. F. BRANDT.

This memoir relates to the numerous remains of marine Mammalia which are met with in the Sarmatian deposits of Vienna; and the author shows, that in the neighbourhood of Vienna and Linz no fewer than three genera of whalebone-whales, namely *Cetotherium*, *Cetotheriopsis*, and *Pachyacanthus*, are represented, the last two being only known from this district. *Cetotheriopsis* includes only the animal hitherto known as *Balænodon lintianus*, whilst the genus *Pachyacanthus* embraces two species of small, heavily built Cetaceans, remarkable for the incrustation of their vertebral processes, and belonging solely to the Sarmatian deposits of Vienna.—*Anzeiger der Akad. der Wiss. in Wien*, April 18, 1872, p. 82.